

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. XIX.

MAY, 1911.

No. 12

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

MONTHLY, EXCEPT AUGUST: 50 cents a year.

Single copy, 5 cents.

Entered at the Boston, Mass., post-office as second
class mail matter, Nov. 14, 1892.

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AUNT PHILLIS'S GUEST.

I was young, and "Harry" was strong,
The summer was bursting from sky and
plain,
Thrilling our blood as we bounded along,
Till a picture flashed, and I dropped the
rein.
A black sea creek, with snaky run,
Slipping through low green leagues of
sedge,
An ebbing tide and a setting sun,
A hut and a woman by the edge.
Her back was bent, and her wool was gray,
The wrinkles lay close on her withered
face.
Children were buried or sold away,—
The freedom had come to the last of a race.
She lived from a neighbor's hominy-pot,
And praised the Lord if "the pain"
passed by.
From the earthen floor the smoke curled out
Through shingles patched with the bright
blue sky."
"Aunt Phillis, you live here all alone?"
I asked, and pitied the gray old head.
Sure as a child, in quiet tone,
"Me and Jesus, massa," she said.
I started, for all the place was aglow
With a presence I had not seen before;
The air was full of a music low,
And the Guest Divine stood at the door!
Ay, it was true that the Lord of Life,
Who seeth the widow give her mite,

Had watched this slave in her weary strife,
And shown himself to her longing sight.
The hut and the dirt, the rags and the skin,
The grovelling want and the darkened
mind,—
I looked on this, but the Lord, within:
(I would what he saw was in me to find!)
A childlike soul, whose faith had force
To see what the angels see in bliss.
She lived, and the Lord lived,—so, of course,
They lived together. She knew but this.
And the life that I had almost despised
As something to pity, so poor and low,
Had already borne fruit that the Lord so
prized
He loved to come near, and see it grow.
No sorrow for her that the life was done:
A few days more of the hut's unrest,
A little while longer to sit in the sun,
Then—*He* would be host, and *she* would be
guest!
And up above, if an angel of light
Should stop on his errand of love some day,
And ask, "Who lives in this mansion bright?"
"*Me and Jesus,*" Aunt Phillis will say.

A fancy, foolish and fond, does it seem?
And things are not as Aunt Phillis's dream?

Friend, surely so!
For this I know,—
That our faiths are foolish by falling below,
Not rising above, what God will show;
That his commonest thing hides a wonder
vast,
To whose beauty our eyes have never passed;
That his *fact* in the present or the to-be
Outshines the best that we think we see.
—W. C. Gannett.

THE MYSTERY OF PAIN.

"By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us:
O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends
of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea."—Ps.
lxv. 5.

If God is good, and if he is all powerful,
why is it that the world has these dire shapes
of pain and sorrow and death among its
constant presences? If the Infinite is love,
why is it that no moment of no hour, the
centuries through, but bears out into that
Infinite some groan or shriek or curse of
life writhing in the grasp of overmastering
calamity? Even in the animal world it
seems bad enough; and students of Nature,
like Huxley and John Fiske, have declared
Nature to be full of cruelty, and a scene of

incessant and universal strife. In human life the agony seems even more acute. Of all the multitude of the living, not one but has some pang to bear. Some hearts are worn almost to despair by all life's burden and pain. To all, in a few brief years, the sun will darken, and the light of life go out with pangs the sum of which, as one thinks of the myriads of earth's people, is awful to compute. Why is it? If God is good, and is all power, why is all this? This is "the mystery of pain."

Indeed, pain is so mixed up with enjoyment in its actual happening that, as a fact, the world at large has never been either crushed or hopelessly perplexed by it. And yet, you know, in older times, all the elements of pain were larger, stronger, in more awful masses, than they are to-day. We are horrified to hear of some dreadful famine. Why, in the older world there were a dozen famines for every one to-day, and far more terrible. In the Black Death of the fourteenth century a quarter of the whole population of Europe and Asia died. In England and Italy half the people perished. There were towns and villages in which hardly a soul survived. In those old centuries the plague came almost every generation. And yet, even with such things to average in, mankind in the mass has never doubted either that life is worth living or that God is good.

The second light upon the mystery—not explanation of it (that, as I have said, we must not expect), but a sort of light which shows it not quite so dark—is this: that it is not those who are most in the shadow of the pain who most feel it a mystery. You see, when I point to that great fact which I have been dwelling on, that the mass of mankind do not feel the world so hopelessly evil, I am apt to be told, No, perhaps not, because the pain does not fall upon the whole of mankind at once, and it is easy for people to be philosophical about the pain of others. Yet do you note that that really is an admission that, leaving aside the sufferings of others, the generality of lives have not more suffering of their own than they can face without dismay? But there is something still more striking about this; namely, that it is not even those who have most to bear who most feel pain such an oppressive mystery. I think, if you go over in your mind those who have had the heaviest burdens to bear, the most pain, those upon whom the mystery of pain has most seemed, to others, to rest,—they have not really been the most oppressed by it, their faith in God's goodness most shaken. As far as

my experience goes, it has been the very opposite. Those difficulties of faith, arising from there being so much pain in the world, are almost all difficulties of those who look at it in theory, not of those who practically have to bear it.

In the course of a pretty long ministry I have seen many, very many, suffering ones; but, for the most part, it has been those suffering ones who have had the happiest faith. It has been those who have known most of pain who have least felt it any oppressive mystery. Why, how often do you see in some crippled or sorely-tried life almost a special compensation in the beautiful sweetness of character and soul! Their friends may feel such pain "a mystery," hardly ever they themselves. Col. Ingersoll said once that the fact of one martyr was enough to discredit the idea of a good God. But, if there were any real force in that difficulty, how curious that the martyrs themselves have never felt it, for, you know, they have not. There have been no grander testimonies of triumphant faith in God's goodness than have continually risen from those on whom that mystery of pain has come in the shape of fierce agonies of rack or fire. So that, practically, this mystery of pain does not seem to be so hopeless and oppressive as, theoretically, one is apt to think it should be.

Man might have been a mere atom in the whole fitting in, like a star or a tree; but he has a nobler part,—a part of growth and a part of thought,—and has had to feel his way, step by step, into his part in this intricate network of substances and forces. And the very things which have seemed hard upon him have helped him. Suffering has been his greatest teacher. Pain is simply the educating touch of those forces around him, when he has taken hold of them wrongly, been ignorant of them, or tried to disregard them.

You notice that I do not put this use as man's teacher as the explanation of the mystery of pain; but I think it is a light upon it, making it look not so dark. But there is a greater light still, I think, in seeing how this liability to danger and pain provides the world with its intensest moral impulses. It is out of dangers and calamities that the noblest heroism of the world is born. Accidents, perils, destructions, which at first almost strike you dumb by the awfulness of the pain they involve, are constantly found to arouse a courage, a heroism, which lift them clear out of the rank of mere physical events, and give thus a value to the world's higher life, utterly outweighing

all mere bodily suffering. You know how there is never a railroad accident, a shipwreck, a great fire, never any one of those dire catastrophes in which the mystery of pain seems to come to its very climax, but out of the dark mystery gleams some light of beautiful heroic unselfishness. Take an illustration. I recall the most awful colliery explosion that ever took place in England, at the "Oaks" Colliery, in 1866, in which above three hundred men and boys perished. But that was not all. While it was still doubtful if some might not be saved, there was a call for volunteers to go down; and without a moment's hesitation thirty-three men in all went down, and at their head the gallant young engineer, Parkin Jeffcock. And then a little while of waiting, and suddenly another explosion, the very gearing of the pit blown into shapeless ruins; and not only was all hope for the main body of miners at an end, but every one of those explorers had perished, too.

I knew that part of the country in those days, and I remember as if it were but yesterday how the horror of all that thrilled through the country; and one of the very thoughts it set many thinking was just this, How could such a thing happen if there be a good God? And yet how not?

Let us have more trust,—the very kind of trust these men had. For what was their trust? That the fire and poisonous gas and caving rock could not hurt them or kill them when on such an errand? No; but that, if they were on such an errand, death itself was not a thing to fear or shun or trouble about. And so it is. I can feel pity for those three hundred men blown to death while at their ordinary work, because it seems such a needless, pitiful waste of life that had no business ever to have happened. But, for those thirty-three who were there upon that noble, unselfish errand, I feel pity to be utterly out of place. No, friends; for this is not a play world, in which the sternest dangers are make-believers, and a good-natured God waits round to keep his best children, at least, from getting hurt or killed. It is a world of hard realities, and awful, unswerving forces; and the goodness of that mighty Life that works through it is seen, not in some occasional kind checking of those forces, but in this,—that, awful and unswerving as they are, they work for good, in nature toward beauty and use, in man toward fuller knowledge and wiser working, and, even at the awfullest, to the loftiest intensity of human character.

And yet one thing more, to end with. If you wish for the very happiest and clearest

light upon that mystery of pain, you will find it, not even by any way of bearing it or looking at it, but by going right into it and trying to make it a little less. The problem that seems to defy your logic becomes, I do not say transparent, but at least full of light, to loving helpfulness. I hardly know how it should; but, certainly, I have never known any one who has taken right hold of this problem of pain, and who is spending any part of his or her days in really grappling with it and trying here and there to lessen it and heal it,—I have never known such an one to feel any oppressive difficulty about it. It is those who look on it from the outside, it is those who muse over it in their studies, to whom pain seems to lie upon the world like a black, impenetrable cloud. Go into that cloud, and you find that in and out of it come a thousand glints of light and use and beautiful, hopeful meaning. There, not in the totality of pain, as you observe it, but in its individuality, as you try to help or heal it, you begin to understand its wide, beneficent part in the slow, onward development of man. There, trying to help or heal, it comes to you how your loving desire is but a tiny impulse of the great meaning of the whole,—that whole which works not only through dead forces, but through living hearts, and means not the forces only, which often we cannot understand, but the hearts and the hearts' love which we can understand. And so, as you go patiently on, doing your little part in the helping and the healing, there comes a sense of how the threads, both of our working and our thinking, lose themselves in vast weavings of eternal things. And here we are but among beginnings, but beginnings that keep moving on; and so the mysteries and fears and tremblings of earth and man lose themselves, not in chaos and darkness, but in that infinite meaning and infinite beneficence which our hearts adore as "God."—*Brooke Herford.*

THE STILL HOUR.

MINISTERING ANGELS.

Brother, the angels say,
Peace to thy heart;
We, too, O brother, have
Been as thou art;
Hope-lifted, doubt-depressed,
Seeing in part,
Tried, troubled, tempted,
Sustained, as thou art.

Brother, they softly say,
 Be our thoughts one;
 Bend thou with us and pray,
 "Thy will be done."
 Our God is thy God;
 He wills the best;
 Trust him as we trusted,
 Rest as we rest.

Ye, too, they gently say,
 Shall angels be;
 Ye, too, O brothers,
 From earth be free;
 Yet in earth's loved ones
 Ye shall have part,
 Bearing God's strength and love
 To the torn heart.

Thus, when the spirit tried,
 Tempted, and worn,
 Finding no earthly aid,
 Heavenward doth turn,
 Come these sweet angel-tones,
 Falling like balm,
 And on the troubled heart
 Steals a deep calm.

Living on this manner, every turn of your experience will be a discovery to you of God, every change a token of his fatherly counsel. Whatever obscurity, darkness, trial, suffering falls upon you; your defeats, losses, injuries; your outward state, employment, relations; what seems hard, unaccountable, severe, or, as Nature might say, vexatious—all these you will see as parts or constitutive elements in God's beautiful and good plan for you, and, as such, are to be accepted with a smile. Trust God! Have an implicit faith in God! and these very things will impart the highest zest to life.—*Horace Bushnell, the Congregationalist.*

PRAYER.

O Thou who providest for all our needs, of earthly things we know not what we should ask of Thee in our prayer; for we cannot tell whether poverty or riches, whether ease or hardship, whether disaster or triumph, shall serve Thy purpose best, and make us what Thou wouldst have us be. But whatsoever of these things falleth to our lot, whether Thou brightenest our pathway with Thy sunshine or sendest the cloud and the storm and the thick darkness, give us the heart of faith and trust, the noble mind which loves the truth, the conscience which looks ever to the right, the affection which makes us spend and be

spent for others, and the devotion which knows no will but Thine. Father, grant us these things, and we are sure that with them Thou wilt give us all that is needful for us. Amen.—*The Christian Register.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

OFFERS.

Mrs. J. W. Rotch, New Bedford, Mass., offers the following: "Sharp Eyes," Gibson; "French Art," Brownell; "Natural History for Young People"; "In Tune with the Infinite"; "Lyrics and Sonnets," Mrs. Browning; "Jan of the Windmill," Mrs. Ewing; "Travels with a Donkey," Stevenson; "Sweetness and Light," Matthew Arnold; Pamphlets on Labor Legislation, Industrial Diseases, Workmen's Accidents; Child Labor Reports; Temperance Reports; large volume of the National Conference of Charities and Correction; "Marpassa," Stephen Phillips; "U. S. Grant," by De Wolfe Hopper; George Jr. Republic Reports; Cripples Reports; last year's *Hibbert's Journal*.

Mrs. F. C. Hall, 177 High Street, Winchendon, Mass., offers to any one paying freight or express, back numbers of *Good Housekeeping*, *Scribner's*, *Harper's Magazine*, *Outlook*, *Garden Magazine*, *Country Gentleman*, and *Suburban Life*.

The Cambridge Branch offers the following books. Address Miss M. A. Vinal, 20 Lowell Street, Cambridge, Mass.: "Germany seen without Spectacles"; "Christie Johnstone"; "Stories by Hans Christian Andersen"; "Peg Woffington"; "Victor Serenus," Henry Wood; "Ballads for Little Folks"; "The Bertrams," Trollope; "Life of Harriet Martineau"; "Concord Days," Alcott; "Stories of Venice"; "Cecilia," Crawford; "The Seer," Leigh Hunt; "The German Emperor, William II."; Selden's "Table Talk"; Lockhart's "Life of Scott"; "The Banquet of Plato"; "Cloister Life of Charles V."; "The Marble Faun"; "Life of Jean Paul Richter"; "Tale of Two Cities"; "Cruise of the 'Cachelot,'" Bullen; "Alice

in Wonderland"; "Life of Alexander and William von Humboldt"; "Representative Men," Emerson; "The Green Book," Maurus Jokai.

Any one willing to pay freight on a barrel of magazines may receive the same by applying to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.

Mrs. Annie M. Freeman, 32 Newtonville Avenue, Newton, Mass., offers to any one paying postage complete years of *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1904-05-06-07-08-09. *Garden Magazine*, 1905-06.

REQUESTS.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. My only child, Helen, aged thirteen, would be very glad of some drawing material and anything suitable to her age. She is very fond of reading, and has no companions when not in school; gets very lonely at times. I appreciate very much the books I received. Address Mrs. L. L. Lyon, R. F. D. 4, Whitaker, North Carolina.

2. Rev. M. N. Royal, Cottage Grove, Alabama, asks for Matthew Henry's "Commentary on the Bible," also an encyclopædia such as Nelson's, Johnson's, or Chambers's; Pierce's "Charles Sumner"; a history of American and English Literature; history of the Unitarian Church, and a revised Bible. Any of these and any other reading matter will benefit a community destitute of good literature, thirteen miles from a railroad.

3. I am a young widow with five boys, oldest fourteen years, the youngest a baby, five months old. Would like to correspond with some of the members. Would also like to have Lee's "History of the United States." Will appreciate your kindness so much. Mrs. Daisy B. Shockley, Stuart, Patrick County, Virginia.

4. I should be glad if any of the Cheerful Letter friends could send me any of the following books: "Destiny of Man," "Ascent of the Soul," poems by Browning, Lowell, Keats, and Shelley, any book or books on Socialism, or any histories, especially of England, Germany, and our own country. Also an old atlas or a school geography containing maps, and a dictionary

of handy size. I do not expect all of these, but should be grateful for any one of them. Mrs. Celestia E. Guernsey, Great Bend, Pennsylvania.

5. Mrs. J. W. Ware, Sandidges, Virginia, is very grateful for literature received in the past, and asks for the *Delineator* and "Vashti."

6. Miss Emma Meader, Sandidges, Virginia, R. F. D. 2, will be glad of a fashion magazine.

7. Mrs. M. E. Washington, Endicott, Virginia, will be thankful for any reading.

8. Mrs. R. C. Duval, Rhoadesville, Virginia, would like anything on crocheting or cross-stitch.

9. Would be thankful to get any good reading and would be glad to get the *Cheerful Letter*. Would like a Bible with large print, as I am old and can't see to read small print. Mrs. S. E. Rogers, R. F. D. 2, Box 26, Sandidges P. O., Amherst County, Virginia.

10. I see in *Cheerful Letter* that reading matter is given to those who live in lonely places, not in touch with literary or cheerful environment. I read all moral standard literature, from novels to the beautiful child stories. Address Mrs. A. V. Mangam, Tennessee Colony, Anderson County, Texas.

11. Mrs. Sarah Gilbert, Fullerton, Nebraska, will be very glad to receive the paper called *The Temperance Cause*, no matter how old the date is.

12. Miss Aristeen Lord, Lovell, Maine, R. F. D. 1, will be glad to receive any reading.

13. Have been almost out of connection with you all for quite a while, my home being broken up by the death of relatives. The Cambridge Branch, through the kindness of Miss Peabody, is sending me the *Munsey Magazine* and *Cheerful Letter*, which afford me and others who read them much pleasure. I am confined to my room a good deal of the time, just now recovering slowly from a severe cold and heart weakness, and I can scarcely write so that you can read it. Reading is such a help and comfort to me, I will appreciate the kindness of any one who will send me magazines and good story-books of good print. Right here

I wish to thank all of the Cheerful Letter friends who have helped cheer and comfort many lonely hours in the past. I can't write many letters, and feel that I should write to the sick and lonely of my acquaintance oftener than I can, but am always pleased to get letters when it does not tax any one to write them. I am in a very dull, remote section, away from my former friends. Any magazine, except *Munsey*, or a book will be very gratefully received and passed on. There is a Mrs. A. A. Peatross here, so please direct to Miss A. Augusta Peatross, Spencer, Virginia, R. 3. Formerly of Campbell, North Carolina.

14. Mr. Maurice J. Williams, care of Capt. V. B. Row, Krotz Springs, Louisiana, asks for the following: Burke's "Speech on Conciliation with America"; Tennyson's "Enoch Arden" and the two "Locksley Halls," "The Princess" and "Idylls of the King"; Scott's "Ivanhoe" and "Lady of the Lake"; Webster's "First Bunker Hill Oration"; McEwan's "The Essentials of the English Sentence," "The Essentials of Argumentation," Smith's "The Writing of the Short Story." This is a large request, but my reference exercises call for all the above-named books.

15. I have never received anything yet, but I get some interesting letters which I appreciate very much. I find them a great comfort. I would like to have "Black Beauty" for my little girl, nine years old, and would like anything suitable for a boy fourteen years old, who has just entered high school. Would like some of E. P. Roe's books or "Pilgrim's Progress" or "Stepping Heavenward" or current numbers of some good magazines for myself and boy also. I have one boy and three little girls, aged nine, seven, and five, respectively. We have no public library here, but one is needed. I do not expect you to send all I mentioned, but just made suggestions of what I liked, as my means are very limited. Mrs. Dora Bryant, Oakland City, Indiana.

16. It has been some time since I sent a request for reading matter, and, as my school has closed, I thought I would write and ask you all for some reading. I will be very glad to get "St. Elmo," "Macaria," "Ten Nights in a Bar-room," "Our Young Hero," or any other good reading. Miss Annie B. Harris, Bumpass, Virginia, R. F. D. 1, Box 88.

17. Please send reading to the following:

Henry Chamberlain, William Buzzell, Harry Dale, Fred Eastwood, Henry Gallagher, William Fairbanks, life convicts. Address all at Windsor, Vermont, care of W. S. Lovell, superintendent State Prison.

18. I wish to thank all who have remembered me by sending reading, and also the friend who sends me the *Cheerful Letter* regularly. I appreciate all their kindness. I should be so glad if some one would send me "Stepping Heavenward," "The Flower of the Family," or "The Home at Greylock," books by Mrs. Elizabeth Prentiss. I would enjoy any of them very much. I have been shut in ever since last fall, and have many sad, lonely hours, since my dear mother left us in October. I miss her so much. Address Mrs. Hartley James, New Gloucester, Maine, Box 3.

19. I have been receiving the *Cheerful Letter* through a friend. I live in the country and get very lonely, my husband being away all day and until late at night, and I am all alone. I should be so glad to have *The Ladies' Home Journal* or *Delineator*, also *Needlecraft*, and a book occasionally. I refer you to Rev. James Hartsell, Cameron, North Carolina, as my reference, and will highly appreciate any reading matter you can send me. Will pass it on to my neighbors. Address Mrs. Bessie McFarland, Manchester, North Carolina.

20. I am very anxious to get the following books: "Infelice," "Beulah," "At the Mercy of Tiberius," and "Speckled Bird," by Augusta Evans. Please send reading to Mrs. B. H. Wood and Mrs. R. A. Gregory both of Callands, Virginia. They are newly married, living in lonely places. I should love to get picture books for my little deaf girl six years old. Address Mr. T. A. Gregory, Callands, Virginia.

21. Mrs. Flora T. Snell, Ironsburg, Tennessee, the mother of six children, in poor health and living on a farm, asks for suitable reading, especially for the boy of fourteen and two little children of five and six years of age.

22. Miss Lucy H. Davis, Big Island, Virginia, will be glad of light stories.

23. Mrs. Lucy V. Grogan, Spencer, Virginia, will be grateful for letters and reading.

24. Any woman's paper will be appreciated by Miss Mary Tinsley, "Forest Home," Albert, Virginia.

25. Mrs. J. M. Broadway, Polkton, Route 2, North Carolina, will be glad of letters and magazines.

26. I fell three years ago last January and broke my hip: since then I have been a great sufferer and invalid. I am now able to help myself a good deal and can walk fairly well with the aid of a stick, and am so thankful I am not helpless and am not an entire burden to others. I still suffer a good deal, but it might be worse. I should enjoy some good interesting books. I have a good many papers and magazines sent by friends and neighbors. It was so kind in you all to remember me after this long time, and I surely appreciate it. Mary C. Preston, Bristol, Tennessee, R. F. D. 1.

27. Mrs. J. H. Maske, Polkton, North Carolina, asks for the "Courtship of Miles Standish" and "Evangeline."

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Mrs. Cora L. Harrington is now to be addressed at Mae, Cass County, Minnesota.

Mrs. A. M. Hausberry, now at McMillan, Pierce County, Washington.

DIED.

Mrs. Robert F. Tyson, Ansonville, North Carolina.

Mrs. Arch N. Vannoy, Tennessee Colony, Texas.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

ENCOURAGE GENTLENESS.

"I would not enter on my list of friends,
Though graced with polished manners and
fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility, the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm."
—Cowper.

Thus sang the poet, and every parent who keeps the sentiment of this verse firmly in mind while training children is adding decidedly to the sum of goodness in the world, declares a writer in the *Philadelphia North American*.

If a child or a grown person display cruelty to an animal, there will inevitably appear somewhere along the line the cruelty of his nature in thought and action toward people. Every human being is innately good. It is the duty of parents to encourage and foster kindness and gentleness in children, and an excellent medium through which these qualities can be emphasized is a horse or any pet.

Children are sometimes afraid of horses on account of their comparative greatness of size. They first of all should be taught common sense in their actions with animals. For instance, they must not stand behind a horse, where a kick might be given that would result in serious injury.

Feeding time is an opportune time to introduce a child to a horse. Encourage self-confidence and show the little one how to present sugar or an apple to the animal. The outstretched palm should be held so that the horse can take up the food with its lips. The little girl or boy will soon learn to hold steadily the favorite sweet, and the delight of the animal will be gratifying to the childish heart.

Rabbits are so mild and gentle themselves that the most timid child cannot feel fearful toward them. Here again the feeding of them is a delightful way to teach the boy or girl gentleness. There must be no rough handling and no teasing. Gentle stroking and a quiet manner at all times must be insisted upon in all actions toward bunnies.

One thing that children should realize is the fact that mother and children must not be separated when the tiny animals or birds need the care of the mother. The story can be driven home by an appeal to personal experience. "How would you feel if an enormous person came and took you away, in spite of your cries, from mother?" will arouse the child to profitable thought and a subsequent hesitation in disturbing the happy family of pets.

Birds should be handled with the utmost delicacy: the fingers should never crush the little things, and the feet should be allowed to rest on something firm, giving a feeling of security. Grain, cornmeal, bread-crumbs held in the other hand will do much toward pacifying a fluttering dove or pigeon. Of course, there must never be any tantalizing in connection with feeding. The tempers of animals and birds are often destroyed by this method of having fun.

Chickens, even the most wary, can be coaxed by corn. They can be taught to eat from the outstretched hand, and any means of bringing children in a kindly relationship with animals is conducive to beneficial results on their characters.

A gentle child usually develops into a kind, gentle woman or man. The thought that other living beings have feelings is a thought well worth encouragement. If animals be treated kindly, there is small doubt that people will receive similar gentleness. And, after all, what is better than a gentle woman or a gentle man?—*Our Dumb Animals*.

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE BIRD TRIBUTE TO VANITY.

This is addressed, primarily, to the women of America, because they are committing a great crime not only against humanity, but also against the purse of the nation. Nevertheless, I have faith in the American woman's essential gentleness and honesty, and I believe that, in spite of her superficial frivolity, her love of the beautiful, and her fealty to fashion, she is incapable of committing such a crime, save through an ignorance which, once enlightened, must itself become a mighty weapon for the right.

The white heron egret—you well rank that, madam and miss, as one of the most beautiful of plumes. But do not suppose that its high price is the result of its beauty. It costs your milliner \$32 an ounce because the coveted plume is grown only in the breeding season; because the mother birds, who bear it, must then be shot, without any hint of "sport," while actually on their nests; because, therefore, each and every egret, of whatever finally dyed color, and worn by however apparently tender a woman, means the sacrifice of the parent and the ruthless desertion of the starving young. It is expensive because your liking for it has nearly wiped out of existence the birds from which it can be obtained.

ENORMOUS COST OF BIRD SLAUGHTER.

Here, of course, is involved merely a question of individual ethics; but, if the trifling life of a bird is a matter of small moment even to the gentler sex,—so long as the eyes of that sex are not outraged by an actual sight of the bloody slaughter,—at least a matter of very great moment is the fact that the rise in the price of your foodstuffs, the yearly increase in your market bill, is the direct result of those feathers in your bonnet, those plumes upon your daughter's hat.

It is an admitted fact that, if our birds were properly protected against indiscriminate slaughter, the loss to our crops through insect pests would be reduced to an almost imperceptible figure: there is scarcely a word uttered in protest against the permission of that slaughter and the consequent annual loss of almost \$800,000,000, an amount nearly equal to the total capitalization of all the national banks in the United States.

Amazing as such a statement at first appears, it is, believe me, readily demonstrable. The insects kill the crops, the birds kill the insects, and we kill the birds.

BIRDS NATURAL PEST-BREAKERS.

Birds are the instinctive enemies of the destroying insects which are, indeed, their ordained food, and their policing of the crops cannot be replaced—can, at most, be but supplemented—by such human devices as the arsenic spray. One pair of rose-breasted grosbeak can, in a week, destroy all of the potato bugs on an acre of potato vines, and then keep the vines clean for the entire season, whereas two boys with a bucket of Paris green, at the traditional salary of one cent for every hundred slain bugs, cannot even approximate that record. Chemistry has brought its pest-breakers to great proficiency, but the insects continue to work too insidiously and too quickly for man adequately to cope with them. It is for you to remember, when you come to select your autumn hat, that the insect rises as the bird falls.

Let nobody hoodwink you with the statement that a species of living beings cannot be exterminated by man. That is a statement made with surprising frequency in this controversy, but one that it is easy to disprove. Species after species of birds have been exterminated within the memory of living men.

Few of us, indeed, realize to what extent bird slaughter is, at this moment, being carried on. In Oregon, only a short time ago, there were more Chinese pheasants than there were in China itself, and yet in Oregon, recently, 50,000 of these pheasants were slaughtered in a single day. The hunter has pronounced the doom of the wood duck and the milliner has sentenced the bluebird. The passenger pigeon, once plentiful, is now absolutely extinct—and small wonder. They used to be butchered in their breeding places by the wagon load; the trees in which they rested were felled; the squabs were bagged and slain; sulphur was burned under the branches, and the stupefied victims, falling to earth, were clubbed or shot to death.

ONLY PLUCKED EGRETS ARE SOLD.

The ornithologist will tell you that it is true that the white egret is grown, and lasts only during breeding time, and that each egret in a hat means the death of a mother bird and the starvation of her young, but the average milliner will add: "These egrets that I have, however, are of a different sort. Most of them, you see, are not white, and the colored ones have been manufactured, not plucked."

That statement is simply a trade lie.

That is all—a lie! The only egret used by milliners is the egret of the white heron, grown and gathered in the manner just described. If it is of any color save white, it has been dyed in deference to an unhappily increasing fashion. Herons' plumes are, it is true, often sold as "ospreys," but this is a palpable joke, since the osprey of science is the plumeless fish hawk. Invention cannot imitate the egret and "manufacture" is impossible.

Almost as much might be said—and said, of course, in vain—for the harbor gull. Priceless as we know these birds to be in their efficiency as seaside scavengers, their handsome white breast feathers have been made into millions of turbans, often with the head of their cousin, the tern, or sea swallow, perched on one side to lend "finish." The result was beautiful and you liked it, but it was beauty at a high price.

DEAD BIRDS NO AID TO BEAUTY.

And yet women go on wearing the plumage of birds. The barn owl which destroys the gophers of the West, the cotton rats of the South, and the mice of the North; the flicker, which preys upon destructive ants; the bluebird which Prof. Beal of the National Department of Agriculture has pronounced invaluable to the farmer,—all these and far beyond a score more continue, cleverly disguised, to adorn the headgear of the sex which we men have always been taught to regard as our superior in gentleness. Is it useless to say with Charles Dudley Warner that "a dead bird does not help the appearance of an ugly woman," and that "a pretty woman needs no such adornment"? Will not fatuous femininity permit even the songbirds to escape?

For my part, however, I yield place to none in my respect for the American woman, and I do not want to misdoubt her power over her children; I confess to no rival in my admiration for her fundamental good heart and good sense; and I do not want to believe that she is capable of knowing cruelty and deliberate economic myopia.—*Benjamin B. Hampton, in Our Dumb Animals.*

THE FRIENDLY STARS.

MAY: THE HEAVENLY TWINS.

On the old astrological maps the constellation, Gemini, or The Twins, was represented by two lusty-looking youths standing in an affectionate attitude, with their heads practically consolidated, and each wearing a star as a sort of monocle in the

outer eye. These stars are called Castor and Pollux, after the brothers from whose eyes they are supposed to shine. They are the brightest stars in the constellation Gemini, which is outlined by two almost parallel rows of stars beginning at Orion, running north-east about twenty degrees, and ending with Castor and Pollux.

Pollux is the brighter of the two and is the only first magnitude star in the constellation.

The stars lie only about four and a half degrees apart and are so conspicuously a pair that each serves as an identifying mark for the other.

In November, when the twin stars first become a prominent feature of the early evening sky, Castor is leading. They are particularly attractive during all of May and the first half of June, when they hang during the evening in the north-western heavens, shining out gently and kindly from the glowing background that the sun has left behind it. It is not the sailor alone whose fancy is pleased with the kindly vigil they seem to keep. A landsman, too, may have pleasanter dreams if he will but take a peep through the western window and exchange friendly glances with them before settling down for the night.

Pollux is yellow in color and of the same type as our sun and Capella, known as solar stars. Castor belongs to that class of stars that includes Vega, Spica, Deneb, and about half the stars in the sky. They are usually white, but are sometimes tinged with color. The tint of Castor is green.—*"The Friendly Stars," Martha Evans Martin.*

THE PUBLIC WORK OF MRS. HOWE.

The service rendered by Mrs. Julia Ward Howe to great causes of public beneficence and social reform was extraordinarily large and important. Few persons, whether women or men, have left behind them so noble a record of unselfish, many-sided, and intelligent work for humanity.

From the very beginning of her married career she manifested a deep interest in the remarkable work of her husband for the education of the blind; and later, when her son-in-law, Dr. Anagnos, took up and carried on with such success the same line of work, her interest continued great in that.

Both Mrs. Howe and her husband enlisted early in the anti-slavery cause, in which they did heroic and devoted service. For some years they edited an anti-slavery paper, the Boston *Commonwealth*. The fact that

Boston wealth and fashion were largely on the side of the slave-holder did not deter these brave souls from siding with the slave and doing all in their power to give him freedom.

After the Civil War was over and the negroes of the South were set at liberty, Mrs. Howe still remained solicitous for their welfare. She never ceased to advocate justice to them, and to urge the importance of giving them schools and education. No voice was more stern than hers in condemnation of the horrors of lynching and every other kind of wrong done to a race that ought to be protected and helped.

Mrs. Howe continued all her life to feel a deep interest in the Greeks, for whom her husband had so chivalrously labored and fought. In the many national struggles and the tragic experiences that they have been called upon to pass through since Dr. Howe left their shores, she never ceased to follow their fortunes with the warmest sympathy. Greeks travelling in this country or coming here to make homes, as many had done in the later decades of her life, were always sure that they had in America at least one genuine friend.

When the Greeks in Boston held their celebrations, she frequently attended; and it was her custom to speak to them in their own language, in response to their greetings.

She was keenly alive to the sufferings and wrongs of all oppressed peoples. It was owing to her that the "Society of American Friends of Russian Freedom" was organized many years ago, with Whittier, Wendell Phillips, Phillips Brooks, and many other distinguished Americans as members. When that remarkable Russian woman, Catherine Breshkovsky, came to this country to tell the terrible story of Russian oppression, Mrs. Howe exerted herself earnestly to secure for her a wide hearing and to awaken a national interest in her cause. And two years ago, when Russia reached its iron fingers across the sea and tried, through the wiles of diplomacy, to get hold of Jan Pouren, the political refugee, and drag him back to trial and either death or Siberian mines, Mrs. Howe assisted in the organization of those hundreds of protest meetings held in all parts of the land which finally resulted in defeating Russia's intrigue and saving Pouren. To the meeting of protest held in Faneuil Hall, Boston, Mrs. Howe sent a letter saying, "Our right of asylum must be kept inviolate and inviolable," and quoting Emerson's words,—

"Bid the broad Atlantic roll
A ferry of the free."

BIBLE NOTES.

THE DAY OF THE RESURRECTION.

(Continued from April Number.)

(6) Everything indicates that the disciples were among the earliest applicants for the priests' assistance. The Galileans abstained from work, as a rule, on the feast-day, more rigidly than the dwellers in Judæa, and this would naturally lead to their making their preparations early. Peter and John are, accordingly, sent to prepare "when the day came." They get the room ready. They hasten, we may believe, to the Court of the Temple with the lamb. They sit down to their meal "at evening"; i.e., about sunset, or 6 P.M. (Matt. xxvi. 20; Mark xiv. 27; Luke xxii. 14). It was in the nature of the case certain that the priests would be the last to leave the courts of the Temple, where they had to wait till the last lamb was offered, to burn the fat and offer incense, and cleanse the Temple, and purify themselves by immersion from the blood of the sacrifices, and that their Paschal meal would therefore be the latest at Jerusalem. They could scarcely expect in any case to eat their Passover before 9 or 10 P.M.

(7) Now let us return to the upper room, in which our Lord and the disciples were assembled. At a comparatively early stage of the meal, before the fourth, or possibly before the third of the four cups of wine which belonged to the ritual of the feast, Judas leaves to do his traitor's work. He has reason to believe that his Master will go out that evening, as was His wont, to Gethsemane. He goes at once to the priests, say about 8 or 9 P.M., with the welcome tidings. The urgency of the case, the sacred duty of checking the false and blasphemous Prophet who called Himself the Son of God, the urgency of the policy which sought to prevent the tumult which might have been caused by an arrest in the daytime, are all reasons for immediate action. *The Paschal meal is postponed.* They will be able, by and by, to comply with the rule that it must be consumed before the morning (Ex. xii. 10). The guards are summoned and sent on their errand, as they had been once before on the "great day" of the Feast of Tabernacles (John vii. 37-45). Messages are despatched to call the members of the Sanhedrin (or, at least, a sufficient number for the purpose) to the hurried meeting, which was held before dawn. Assume these facts, and all runs smoothly. When Judas leaves, the disciples, looking

forward to the usual festive Chagigah on the following day, the *feast* as distinct from the *Passover*, suppose that he is gone to prepare for that, and there is no ground for thinking that at that hour the markets would be shut or that lambs and bread and wine might not be purchased, or, at least, ordered for the following day. When the priests, on the other hand, refused to enter into the Praetorium, "lest they should be defiled," it was because they, and they alone, perhaps, in all Jerusalem, had still to eat the Passover which others had eaten on the previous evening. Had their meal been due on the evening that followed the crucifixion, their scruples would have been needless. They had but to wash and wait till sunset, and they would have been purified from all defilement. With them the case was more urgent. Probably even the pressure of hunger made them anxious to finish the untasted meal of the previous evening. It was then "early," say about 4 or 5 A.M. When Pilate gave his sentence, it was "about the sixth hour"; *i.e.*, assuming John to use the Roman reckoning of the hours, 6 A.M. (But see John iv. 6 and xix. 14.) Then their work was done. As soon as they had left the matter in Pilate's hands, *they could eat their Passover*, turning the supper into a breakfast.

(8) There remain only a few minor points above noticed. And (a) as to the *preparation*. Here the answer lies on the surface. That name (Paraskeüe) was given to the day of the week, our Friday, the day before the Sabbath, and had absolutely nothing to do with any preparation for the Passover. The Gospels show this beyond the shadow of a doubt (Mark xv. 42; Matt. xxvii. 62; Luke xxiii. 54). If any confirmation were wanted, it may be found in the fact that the name is applied in a Graeco-Roman decree quoted by Josephus (Ant. xvi. 6, sec. 2) to the week-day which answers to our Friday. Even the phrase which seems most to suggest a different view, the "preparation of the Passover" in John xix. 14, does not mean more, on any strict interpretation, than the "Passover Friday," the Friday in the Passover week, and coming, therefore, before a Sabbath more solemn than others (John xix. 31). It may be noted further that the term "Paraskeüe" was adopted by the Church, Western as well as Eastern, as a synonym for the Dies Veneris, or Friday.—*The Handy Commentary*.

I would rather suffer for speaking the truth, than that the truth should suffer for want of my speaking.—*John Pym*.

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, Canton Corner, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

FLOWER CONUNDRUMS.

1. What is an unpopular one who does go?
2. When you buy an alarm clock, what do you ask for?
3. What are fire crackers?
4. What are stage houses made of?
5. Old-fashioned flowers are planted in what?
6. What is often impressed on little boys?

II.

BEHEADMENTS AND CURTAILMENTS.

Behead and curtail six five-letter words, leaving three-letter words, the middle letters of which in their order will spell the name of a favorite fruit.

1. A woven fabric of cotton, linen, or wool; a plot of land.
2. A deciduous, coniferous tree; a portion of a curved line.
3. A table to put food upon; an implement for propelling a boat.
4. Tears asunder; the last point of anything.
5. Placed in confinement; the latter part of life.
6. Water in the state of vapor; the evening meal.

—Every Other Sunday.

III.

A DIAMOND.

1. A consonant.
2. To be able.
3. To leap or skip.
4. A kind of sedge or reed growing in the valley of the Nile.
5. A sinew or tendon.
6. An acid, ill-smelling plant with greenish-yellow flowers.
7. A consonant.

IV.

TRIPLE CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

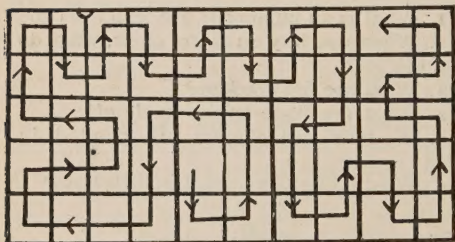
- In conflagration, but not in fire.
 In configure, but not in cheese.
 In scare, but not in fright.
 In scutate, but not in ice.
 In separate, but not in toil.
 In raiment, but not in clothes.

In bigamy, but not in conserve.
 In actual, but not in dynamo.
 In Acadian, but not in French.
 My *whole* gives the names of three countries of Central America.

Answers to puzzles in the April number.

FLOWER CONUNDRUMS.—1. Buttercup. 2. Bluet. 3. Tulips. 4. Bachelor Buttons. 5. Tea Rose. 6. Blue Bell.

LABYRINTH OF LETTERS.—



Jack in the Pulpit.
 Common Blue Violet.
 Hepatica.
 Wood Anemone.

DOUBLE CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—Blood Root, Saxifrage.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of an instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

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The regular monthly meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange will take place on Friday, May 5, at 10.30 A.M. All interested are cordially invited to be present.

The chairman is at the Alliance headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, every Monday and Thursday from 10 to 12 o'clock.

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Editor of "The Cheerful Letter," Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.